

Application No.: 09/743330
Docket No.: AD6580USPCT

Page 3

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3 and 4 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being patentable over JP 04102883 in view of Satoji (US 4, 687,696).

Applicant reiterates that a separation finger for electro photographic devices, having its tip diameters being no greater than 30 microns and being formed by compression-molding a blend of polyimide resin powder and PTFE resin powder as recited in claim 1 is believed non-obvious in view of the prior art cited. First, in the present invention, the separation finger formed by a blend of polyimide and PTFE with particularly selected weight-based blending ratios of such polymers, weight average molecular and particle size of PTFE associated with compression molding (see claim 1) performs differently from conventional fluorinated resin coated finger strips for copying machines. Applicant references page 4, lines 14-17 of WO 00/07074 which states that the present invention separation finger surface not only has non-adhesion of toner without requiring coating but also retains non-adhesion of toner when the surface layer has worn and thus is more durable than a coated separating finger. This is in contrast to the fluororesin coating of Satoji. Secondly, the Examiner states on page 3 of the Office Action, the distinction that Satoji does not disclose the "range of the weight average molecular weight" as claimed in the instant invention. (See lines 1-9, page 3 of the present invention specification to see the importance of the weight-average molecular weight of the present invention.) Thirdly, one of ordinary skill in the art would not have found it obvious to attain the desired characteristics of the present invention and improve separation fingers in non-adhesion to toner and wear resistance under the conditions of friction caused by toner and paper dust, and also to minimize the diameters of the tips of separation finger. See amended claim 5, which includes this improvement. Support for this claim amendment is found on page 2, lines 1-3 of the specification (WO 00/07074).

JP04-102883 does not disclose weight average molecular weight of PTFE. JP'883 does not disclose the above mentioned limitations of the present invention. The referenced cited art does not lead one to combine them. However, even if combined, JP'883 in combination with Satoji or singly would not have yielded the present invention of amended claim 1 as described above. Since claims 3 and 4 depend from claim 1, which is presumed allowable for the above stated reasons, claims 3 and 4 are also believed to be in allowable condition.

In the "*Response to the Arguments*", the Examiner states that Applicant has not shown how the separation finger performs differently. Applicant directs the Examiner to page 7, Table 3 and lines 30-31, and page 8, lines 1-3 which provides that the fluororesin loses its non-adhesion when worn to 50 microns while the present invention retains outstanding adhesion. Responsive to the Examiner's comment regarding the improvement of the separation fingers not being recited in the claims. Claim 1 has been amended to include said

Application No.: 09/743330
Docket No.: AD6580USPCT

Page 4

limitation. Support for this limitation is found on page 2, lines 1-3 of the specification (WO 00/07074) and thus, this claim amendment does not include new matter.

The Examiner asserts that "0" is included in the limitation of "not greater than 30 μm ". Applicant, however, contends that for one of ordinary skill in the art it is understood that the tip of the separation fingers has a certain diameter so that copying papers touch a tip portion of separation fingers and the upper limit to the tip diameters is sufficient and necessary for the skilled artisan to define it. Furthermore, claim 1 states that the "separation finger **having its tip diameters** being not greater than 30 μm " arguably provides that there must be a tip diameter which implicitly provides that in order to have a diameter the value is greater than zero.

Thus, for the above reasons, independent amended claim 1 and claims 3 and 4 dependent therefrom, are believed to be in allowable condition. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

If any fee is due in order to obtain consideration of this response, please charge that fee to Deposit Account No. 04-1928 (E.I. du Pont de Nemours and Company).

In view of the foregoing, allowance of the above-referenced application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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